



5 Days

# Iceland

## Glaciers and Geysers

Iceland is a Geographer's paradise with volcanoes, hot springs and geysers, not to mention the dramatic glaciers. It's a country that never ceases to amaze. This dynamic Geography School trip itinerary has been designed to incorporate all the major sites and is guaranteed to engage and inspire Geography students. As well as the well known highlights including Pingvellir National Park, geothermal areas and black sand beaches, we leave the beaten track and go hiking on the Sólheimajökull glacier to witness the incredible features and discover how glaciers impact on their natural environment over time.



# Recommended tour itinerary

## Day 1

### Arrive Reykjavik, Iceland

Fly UK to Reykjavik. On arrival we'll be met by our highly experienced local team and transferred straight to the Blue Lagoon where we can recover from our flight relaxing in the naturally heated warm water. This huge outdoor spa is 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>, holds six million litres of geothermal seawater and is powered entirely by geothermal energy. As the cold mixture of seawater and ground water meets cooling magmatic intrusions deep in the earth, where it rapidly heats and rises to be harnessed in the lagoon. A visit to the Blue Lagoon is not only a relaxing start to the trip, it is one of the few places on Earth where you can bathe between two continents, as the Euro-Asian and American tectonic plates meet here. The distinctive blue colour is down to the high levels of silica and minerals which are reported to be very beneficial for the skin and general well being. After we have finished at the Blue Lagoon we will continue into Reykjavik, and hopefully have time to head out for an orientation walk to get acquainted with this charming compact capital city.

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## Day 2

### Pingvellir National Park, Gullfoss Waterfall & Great Geysir, Golden Triangle

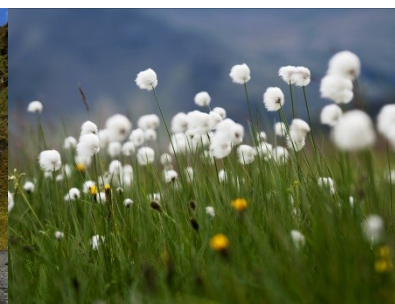
Today is our first full day exploring this land of Ice and Fire. Heading out of Reykjavik we drive to Gullfoss, one of Iceland's most dramatic waterfalls, and watch as thousands of tons of icy water thunder down three steps of lava layers with breath-taking power and grandeur. Our next stop is a geothermal area which is the home of the famous, 10,000-year-old "Great Geysir". Here the earth gurgles and bubbles while the geysir hurls boiling water 70m into the air. We also see one of the most active geysirs in the area, Strokkur.

We continue to the famous Pingvellir National Park. Pingvellir is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the oldest democratic parliament in the world, founded in 930. From a geological point of view, it is the place where the tectonic plates of America and Europe meet, the rift valley is clearly visible.

After lunch we have two options: We can either embark on an enthralling off road adventure heading into the wild interior using specially modified super jeeps. We'll be the envy of other school groups as our vehicles pick us up and head into a dramatic landscape of volcanoes, rivers and grassy plains, all of which become effortlessly accessible in these ultimate off road vehicles. Guaranteed to be a real highlight of the trip and put a big smile on all of our faces for days to come.

As an alternative to superjeeps we may wish to consider exploring a lava cave, Iceland has a wealth of accessible and dramatic network of lava tubes, caverns and caves. Return to Reykjavik overnight.

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### Day 3

## Morning visit to the Árbæjarsafn open air museum. Cultural visit to the Hveragerdi Geothermal Park & Helliheið Geothermal Power plant

Árbæjarsafn is the historical museum of the city of Reykjavík as well as an open air museum and regional museum. Its purpose is to give the public an insight into the living conditions, work and recreational activities of the people of Reykjavík in earlier times. This is a popular place for students as history comes to life when they explore the old houses.

We continue on to Hveragerði, where we have the opportunity to study how a community develops and adapts to the harsh environment. We will have an in-depth tour of the area, learning how the locals have harnessed the unlimited supply of naturally hot water on their doorstep. There is the opportunity to boil eggs in the hot springs and have a soothing mud foot-bath before we move on. We then journey forward, stopping to see the Helliheið Geothermal Power plant. The area surrounding the power plant is a wild and barren landscape. As we drive up to the plant we'll see the huge vents where the steam is stored and miles of pipes stretching into the distance. The tour is an insightful introduction to renewable energy plants. Our destination this evening is a rural retreat in the beautiful countryside where we'll be able to unwind, have a game of football or relax overlooking the Atlantic ocean.

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### Day 4

## Sólheimajökull Glacier & South Shore

On the fourth day, we explore the Icelandic south coast. Our first stop is a visit to the Seljalandsfoss and Skógarfoss waterfalls, both featuring distinctive rock escarpment shelves over which the water cascades, best illustrated at Seljalandsfoss. We have the opportunity to walk behind the falls and explore the geology ourselves.

Our next adventure is an exhilarating hike on the Sólheimajökull Glacier. After a comprehensive safety briefing we'll put on crampons and be given an ice axe, cross the terminal moraine and head onto the glacier itself to explore the magnificent ice flows, crevasses and cauldrons. There is no better way for students to experience their subject up close and hands on. This activity also leads to a wider discussion about climate change and an exploration of changes observed in and around the glacier. We return to Reykjavík for our final evening.

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### Day 5

## Return to the UK

After breakfast we head back to the airport for our flight direct to the UK.

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# Further information

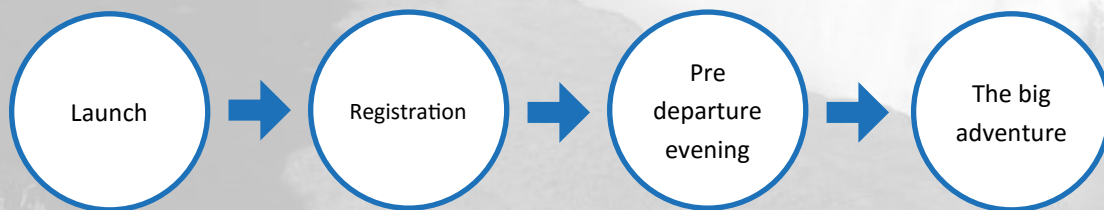
## Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch evening
- Pre-departure preparation evening
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

## What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

## Your educational journey timeline



## Physical journey rating:

● ● ○ ○ ○ 2/5

Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

## Culture shock rating:

● ○ ○ ○ ○ 1/5

Culturally, this is the least challenging of the STC's trip grades. English is the native language. Students are likely to find the food, customs and access to services similar to the UK.



# A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey.

## 1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your educational travel itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

## 3 Arrange a trip launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with a comprehensive information evening and an opportunity for questions.



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